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THE UNCONQUERED SUN

Helen Todd

This article first appeared in *The Theosophical Forum*, issue of January 1939. Helen Savage (Todd) was then on the editorial staff of that international magazine, and was later, from 1971-1984 co-editor of *The Eclectic Theosophist*. —ED.

It is the 31st of December, and, here in California, 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We have been listening to a short-wave radio program of merry-making from the B.B.C. in London. Suddenly the laughter and singing become fainter as Big Ben strikes the hour—twelve deep-toned bells, and with the last stroke the voice of the announcer says: 'We wish you the old, old wish: A Happy and Prosperous New Year!' As we shut off the radio we realize that already the New Year has dawned for half the world; already the peoples of half the world have put away thoughts of the old year, and are looking to the unseen days ahead with hearts full of hope.

It is actually a wave of hope that moves steadily around the earth and encircles the globe, as that magic moment when the old year is dead and the new is born touches each longitude on the spinning earth. There is cumulative power in this surging wave—there must be; for the least enlightened must for the first early hours of the New Year feel, as a deep-rooted intuition, that somehow, somewhere, there is a means of finding spiritual security: that beauty and joy and love belong to the human race; and that perhaps the first intimations of a new wisdom in regard to living are waiting for them in the unspoiled days ahead.

We need not consider here the fact that as the days of the new year unfold and prove to be but the children of those that have gone before, too often this hope, this intuition of the fundamental rightness in the Universe, dies. We shall note only that it has lived, however briefly, and because of the quality of this hope we know that it is based upon a reality. It is a flash of light from a *real* world that seems to surround us but eludes us, and it fills us momentarily with conviction.

Is there a means by which we can step over the threshold and move familiarly in this realm where our inspired dreams become actualities? How can it be done?

There is an ancient symbol which yet has never grown old, and within its manifold significances lies the answer

to our question. It is the symbol of the Sun. This symbol contains within itself the secrets of man's unawakened powers. First, the Sun is a symbol of immortality. Even science conceives of its life as a virtual eternity, for we are told that in 150,000,000,000 years it will not lose even one per cent of its stupendous mass. And the Ancient Wisdom adds that the earth will know many deaths, but with each new imbodiment it will witness again the shining of the great luminary, which, during the long ages of the earth's obscurity, has known no night and no lessening of its vital power, for it is continuously replenished from the secret stores of its own inner being.

Further, in the Sun we see a symbol of generous giving of oneself. It is pouring forth its vital substance at the rate of 133,000,000,000,000 tons a day, according to science; and this, not meely in prodigal wastefulness through the vastness of the heavenly spaces, but in order to sustain and nourish all the planetary satellites of its kingdom, and for the maintenance of all beings that live therein. For the life of the planets is a part of the life of the Sun; it is one life pulsating through the entire system.

Then there is kingliness with its attendant attributes of benevolence and wisdom. And who, contemplating the orderly workings of cosmic law in the solar kingdom can deny that this mighty sovereign rules by divine right?

Beauty, also, is symbolized in the Sun. The pale radiance of the early dawn, the prismatic colors in the rainbow, the greens and golds and scarlets of trees and flowers, the flash and fire of jewels, the blue haze of far distant hills—all these are solar in origin. It is beauty stepped down to us who are incapable of beholding face to face the glorious veil of the Sun-God himself.

And here we have slipped unwittingly into the phraseology of the ancient 'pagan' world. But in spite of what the scholars may say, the ancients were not mere children adoring a bright disc in the sky. There in nothing infantile in the ancient Vedic prayer:

Unveil O Thou that givest sustenance to the Universe,
From Whom all things proceed, to Whom all must return,
That face of the True Sun, now hidden by a vase of golden light,
That we may know the Truth, and do our whole duty
On our journey to Thy Sacred Seat.

—(Recension by W.Q. Judge)

The Egyptian Osiris, the Persian Ormazd, Surya and

Mithras, Adonis and Apollo, the Scandinavian Baldur, Lugh of the Long Hand among the Celts, Tonac-atlcoatl (Serpent-Sun) god of the ancient Aztecs—under whatever name it may have appeared, it was a Divine Being whom the ancient peoples addressed. They recognized that the solar universe was governed over by a divine hierarch, the *spiritual* Sun, whose real being is veiled in a garment of light. He was to them the vortex of the divine-spiritual fire of the universe. Spiritually as well as physically he was the nourisher of all within his kingdom; and therefore, whatever might befall mankind, they knew that in their being they were secure as long as they allowed his beneficent rays to light them within.

For those who were students of the Mysteries, there was even a deeper significance to the Sun-symbol. They were taught that as the source of the solar universe was a divinity to whom all the lesser planetary gods made obeisance, so the little universe of man had its own central sun, a ray of the solar deity; and to this central sun the purely human in man, an unawakened god indeed, should be a faithful servitor.

Why a servitor? Because we owe our very life to it. The Mysteries taught that this human self of ours has been built up through many ages by the Evolver within, the Sun-god within. Step by step, from unconscious elemental substance, through intermediate degrees of semi-conscious life to the time when the form was ready to contain the light of mind, the delicate process had taken place. Like the golden drop of honey that the bee must gather from a thousand flower-chalices, so the precious soul-fabric had been built from the essence of countless imbodiments. And with mind came power, and the ability to learn to serve with self-conscious understanding the sacrificing parent within, for it is by means of this soul of ours that our divinity may shine in the grosser worlds of substance. If the soul succeeds in becoming the perfect channel, pellucid to the shining of the solar light, it has the ineffable reward of itself being born in the spiritual world. Then the human being actually becomes a dweller among the gods even while he performs his appointed duties among men on earth. This rare phenomenon was announced mystically with the words: "The Sun has arisen! A Sun-God is born!"

It was also a fact of common knowledge among the ancients that the phenomena of the visible world are a symbol of and in fact delineate what is taking place behind the veil of outer things. Therefore to the enlightened among them, the cycle of the year, with its changing seasons, was a mystery-pageant enacted upon a cosmic stage, each episode of which depicted in symbolic form a spiritual verity. Thus when the time of the 'Winter Solstice came round, and the sun began

again his journey to the northern hemisphere, they saw more in it than merely a time for rejoicing because the world would be filled with warmth again, and the fields would again be green and fruitful; they read the symbol aright. Their hymns were to the True Sun, the Sol Invictus, the Unconquered Sun, whose steadfast shining throughout the aeons is a guarantee of the spiritual security in the Universe. It was a sign to them that because of the focus of certain solar forces it was a fruitful time for communion with the sun-god within.

Even candidates in the Less Mysteries knew that at this season "the trained and fully prepared neophyte might enter at least temporarily into the Heart of the Universe, into the Light of the World, and bring back with him an unimpaired memory of what the greatest of Adventures had taught him." And he returned surrounded with a nimbus or aureole. He was "clothed with the Sun."—(*The Esoteric Tradition*, 1079)

It is this fact that is the basis of all the traditions of the ancient peoples in which there was a correspondence between initiates, great kings and heroes, and the Sun. The Babylonian heroes, Nimrod and Gilgamesh both became sun-gods after undergoing a series of trials; Hercules, Theseus and Perseus of Greece were all born of a virgin and were sons of the Sun. Quetzalcoatl, god-hero of the Mexicans, was a sun-god. His name means 'Feathered Serpent,' a symbol with them, as among the Phoenicians and others, of certain solar attributes. Krishna is represented in the *Mahabharata* as born of Aditi, the bright Dawn-Goddess, who gives birth to the Sun. Mithras, a sun-god, was called 'Giver of Glory' because he was supposed to bestow upon his successful suppliants in initiation the aureole or nimbus, as shown in many Mithraic monuments. In the Egyptian mysteries when the candidate for initiation awakens from his trance, it is said that the Hierophant-Initiators appeared "and the sacramental words were pronounced, ostensibly, to the Sun-Osiris, addressed in reality to the Spirit Sun within, enlightening the newly-born man."

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 559

The Christian Savior also must come under this enumeration of Sun-gods if we are to consider authentic the records of early Christianity. H.P. Blavatsky says (*Lucifer*, Dec., 1887), after quoting from Ralston Skinner certain interpretations of the Christos-myth as typifying the Sun:

For, as the same author shows further, John, Jesus and even Apollonius of Tyana were but epitomizers of the history of the Sun "under differences of aspect or conditions." The explanation, he says, "is simple enough, when it is considered that the name *Jesus*, Hebrew and Apollonius, or Apollo, are alike names of the *Sun in the heavens*, and, necessarily, the history of the one, as to his travels through *the signs*, with

the personifications of his sufferings, triumphs and miracles, could be but the *history of the other*, where there is a widespread, common method of describing those travels by personification.

The early Christians themselves obviously accepted this interpretation of their Christ-Sun as passing through the Twelve Zodiacal Signs—a symbol of the trials undergone by the initiate in the Mysteries—because there exist even today relics of this belief.

The representation of Jesus as the 'Christ-Sun' and of his twelve disciples as representing the twelve Signs of Zodiac, may be seen even today graven on the building-stones of not a few churches in central and southern European countries, . . . — *The Esoteric Tradition*, 1082

As the above brief illustrations show, in the minds of the ancients what happened in and to the Universe was inextricably interwoven with what happened to man. And rightly so. For man apart from the Universe were indeed a lost creature. It is the present-day erroneous method of looking at our relationship to the universe which is responsible for the evidences in so many quarters of the sense of aimlessness, of drifting in an alien world. Yet the hope that we feel at times like the New Yew, the sense that the confusion and apparently irreconcilable conflicting elements in the life of the peoples of the world, are all but a bad dream—such intuitions as these show that at times even the least of men are illumined by a ray from the sun-god of their own being.

Were there no systematized philosophy of life to guide men in their search for the Real, had there never appeared among men a single Teacher to proclaim the age-old secret, we should still have with us as a daily and yearly testimony the glorious Sun in the heavens, symbol of the Unconquered Sun within ourselves. To meditate upon the significance of this symbol, as H.P. Blavatsky urges us to do, is to have at least an introduction to the study of the Real Self and our relation to it. First, like our day-star, it is immortal; for though the earthly man is dissipated at death, there is no death for the Inner Sun, and with the disappearance of its earth-child it takes up its duties in other spheres, only to return again at the appointed hour to bring to birth again in another earth life, its yet undeveloped child.

Further, like the Sun in the heavens, it is the generous giver of itself, for its life is our life, and by its power alone do and can we grow. And as for benevolence and wisdom: it is from this source that springs our ability to know, to act wisely, to intuit the deepest aspects of the cosmic workings, to reach out in sympathy towards another fellow-being, to use discrimination, and restraint, and compassion.

And lastly, in the creation of all that is beautiful, we are stepping down its beauty, we are allowing the beauty

of the solar light to shine on earth. This is even more true when we have made of ourself a work of beauty. Beauty of character is the supreme tribute to the god-sun within. To the degree that this is attained, we are living in the sunlit world of the spirit and have shown that our hope of the New Year was not a mere dream.

IN TIMES OF CRISIS

[We feel it a duty at this time when more Theosophists are seeking to know G. de Purucker, what he came to do, what he accomplished, to devote some pages (how we wish we had more!) in our *Eclectic*, to excerpts from some of his talks, both formal and informal. So we begin with the following, which takes us back to the first year of his leadership at Point Loma, California, a talk to students on June 11, 1930, thus some 9 years prior to the opening of World War II.—ED.]

. . . Humanity is passing out of one cycle and entering into another one. Such periods of transition are always very dangerous to the spiritual and intellectual, social and political, welfare of mankind. They are always times of crisis.

At present we are not far distant in time from a social and political upheaval which will shake the very foundations of present civilizations. It will unquestionably be accompanied with bloody revolutions in different countries, and with wars; and I do not care to go farther into it. I think that I had better not. One of the efforts of the Teachers, or rather perhaps, the main effort of the Teachers, in founding the Theosophical Movement was to provide an international body of men and women who by the power of their thought expressed in words, in teachings, whether oral or written, and by their acts, would tend to alleviate the evils that are coming, that are about to fall upon humanity.

It is amazing how much a few determined and doggedly-willed men and women can do. History has shown it repeatedly. That is why I say preach Theosophy from the housetops, teach it, declare it. Neglect no opportunity to pass the good tidings on. Our main duty is not so much to propagate the Theosophical Movement, although that is the way by which our main duty is done. In itself it is a secondary thing. *Our main work is to change men's hearts, men's minds, to soften the horrors when they come, to alleviate the distress by preparing for it before it comes.* [Italics added].

There is no humanitarian work so lofty as this. There will be an unloosening of human passions when these things come about which will be more terrible than anything history has known of, and while the Theosophical Society, our Theosophical Movement, will probably be quite unable to stop it entirely by the influence of Theosophical thought, and Theosophical thinking, and by its refining and alleviating power, nevertheless all this will greatly help in diminishing the evil that might otherwise be done.

Teach men brotherhood, teach men that they are inseparably bound together, that what all do everyone is responsible for; that there is no fundamental separation of interests at all in any line—spiritual, religious, political, what not. Those are the thoughts that must go out into the world's consciousness.

Teach men the nature and characteristics and function of the proud and selfish brain-mind in which most men live today, and which in their ignorance they are proud of. Teach men its limitations, and also its value as the instrument for spiritual wisdom, when it is properly trained and directed by the spiritual will. These are the teachings that will raise men's ideals and ideas. Furthermore, but by no means last, teach men the philosophy of the Ancient Religion of mankind, showing to men their common origin, their common destiny, on the one hand; and the interlocking and interwoven spiritual, psychical, and physical forces, energies, and powers of Nature on the other hand.

Do you think, for instance, that this recent Great War [World War I of 1914-18] would or could have come about, if for the last eighteen or nineteen hundred years men had had Theosophy in their minds? If the psychic and mental atmosphere in European countries had been filled with Theosophical thoughts and ideals and truths? No! The Great War arose out of centuries of wrong thinking and wrong doing, out of selfishness, out of a lack of knowledge of the nature of man and of his being rooted in the Universe; and that the Universe is essentially a spiritual being; that man fundamentally and intrinsically is a god; and that his main and noblest duty is so to live—to live divinely, to live god-like. Deprivation and loss of possessions are as nothing at all in comparison with knowing and possessing and living these sublime truths. They could have made a civilization which would have held in chains the passions, the selfish impulses, the grasping, acquisitive spirit, which have dominated all European civilization up to the present, and which still dominate it.

It is the duty of the Theosophical Movement to loosen into the world a new spiritual energy, an illumination—to change men's hearts and to give light to their minds.

[From a talk to students, July 9, 1930.]

... The Theosophical Movement must be kept pure and inspired by the original unadulterated teachings derived from the flow of inspiration from the Great Lodge. The Theosophical Movement must not be allowed to degenerate into a dogmatic religion, into a sectarian faith.

It matters not what happens to individual Theosophists. It matters not what happens to the Messengers. The work of safety and purification must

be done, and it will be done. I will tell you frankly that I was sent to do that work more than anything else—to rescue genuine Theosophists in the other societies, and to keep our own Society in the purity, in the Theosophical purity, that at present distinguishes it...

... The time has arrived in the racial evolution when this last effort made by the Masters can be kept as it was given to us, pure and unadulterated. And that is what we are here for... It is not mere *numbers* of adherents to which the Masters look as the distinguishing quality... What we really want is not only members but first, and above all other things, *quality* in the members that we have. This quality shows in those who love Theosophy so that it fills their lives, and thus there is an instinct in them to live for it, and to die for it, if needs be. That is the chela-spirit.

As long as that spirit can be kept alive, the Theosophical Society will live on into the future, pure and undefiled, and nothing in the Universe can prevail against it, or will, because a spiritual movement such as this was intended to be—and in our own Society even yet is—is allied to the very heart of the Universe, which heart is the fountain of Light.

If it fails, if the Theosophical Movement fails, we shall be responsible—you and I. The Theosophical Movement is humanity's hope, and this is no grandiloquent phrase, no vain boast. It is holy truth. Nothing matters in comparison. Nothing matters at all—what happens to you or to me—if we can keep the Society as it was given to us. As we have received it we must hand it on; and, please the Immortal Gods, we will!...

REINCARNATION IN CHRISTIANITY

Interview with Geddes MacGregor

Professor MacGregor was interviewed by the editor of *Venture Inward*, A. Robert Smith, assisted by contributing writer Ruth O'Lill. The complete interview has much of interest; we give here only some extracts.

Angelian theologian Geddes MacGregor has been called perhaps the most distinguished Christian writer today in defense of reincarnation. But the 78-year-old author of *Reincarnation in Christianity* and 30 other religious books remarks wryly that such an accolade is "**not** a difficult attainment, one might say, since I have few reputable competitors!"

Born in Scotland, he received advanced degrees from the universities of Edinburgh, Oxford, and Paris, including the grand doctorat from the Sorbonne. An Anglican priest, he is an honorary canon of San Diego and has preached in many pulpits, including Princeton Chapel, Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's, London.

He came to the United States in 1949 as the first holder of the Rufus Jones Chair of Philosophy and Religion at Bryn Mawr. In 1960 he became dean of the Graduate School of Religion at the University of Southern California, where he is now Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Philosophy.

In 1976 when invited to lecture at McGill University in Canada, he suggested three topics 'and added "Reincarnation in Christianity", never expecting them to consider it at all. "The dean replied that the faculty felt I had given them no choice: The fourth was the one everyone wanted. The large auditorium was packed, with crowds sitting on the stairs. The dean of the Anglican cathedral there (now a bishop) had to sit on the piano stool. There were Hindus and Buddhists in the audience."

In recent books, MacGregor cited eschatology—the doctrine of 'last days'—as 'the most confused aspect of Christian theology.' Rather than a single lifetime, thousands of incarnations may be in store for us, he writes, some of them possibly on other planets. The purpose of many incarnations, he believes, is "to prepare us to have fellowship with God, for one lifetime is not enough to attain the requisite spiritual wisdom and moral perfection. . . ."

(Excerpts from the interview:)

Q. Historically, has the church—Roman Catholic or Protestant—played politics with doctrine, tailoring it one way or another to serve the perceived ends of the church? Is reincarnation a political issue in that sense?

A. Are you kidding! Of course. One of the main reasons, historically, for opposition to reincarnationism is a political one: fear or loss of power. Karmic and rebirth views need not necessarily separate one from the church, and of course many intelligent people see no incompatibility. . . . The church is a great school and ought to be revered, but on a reincarnationist-karmic view it is not indispensable. Church leaders have generally liked to see it as indispensable. Hence, for instance, the genocide of the Albigenses, the 12-century reincarnationists.

Q. You wrote in *The Christening of Karma* that reincarnationism had had a "bad press in the history of Christian thought and practice." What was the origin of this bad press?

A. I think it was largely fear on the part of ecclesiastical leaders.

Q. Some pro-reincarnation writers claim that reincarnation was deleted from the official doctrine of the church at one of the early councils, which might explain why some passages of Scripture seem to imply a belief in the concept of rebirth? Was reincarnation expunged? If so, when, by whom, and why?

A. I do not know of any evidence for the suppres-

sion of reincarnationist passages in Scripture. The scriptural canon was formed too early, and we have relatively very early manuscripts of the Greek Bible (e.g., the 4th century) besides copious references in much earlier documents. Later, however, when reincarnationism was coming to be resisted, Origen, for instance, was indubitably tampered with, and it seems extremely probable that his friends ill served him by deleting or restating his words on that subject, because sometimes he seems clearly to support it, while at other times he says specifically that it is contrary to the church of God. No one doubts that he taught the pre-existence of souls, a doctrine that Thomas Aquinas rightly states *implies* reincarnationism. (Thomas did not subscribe to reincarnationism, but he was an unusually gifted thinker.) . . .

Q. When did you become persuaded that karma and Christianity were compatible? What prompted you to take such an unconventional stand? Have you been penalized for it in any way professionally or socially?

A. I first became interested in reincarnation when I was 15. No doubt I would be considered somewhat precocious—I read much of Dante and some of Augustine at 14. I read everything I could lay my hands on about it, mostly theosophical books. Before that, however, the distaste for religion that I had experienced for many years before puberty had changed to an immensely strong conviction for Christianity, especially in its Catholic form, to which I was unaccustomed for it was alien to my upbringing. So I reluctantly had to try to reject karma and other such doctrines since they seemed to be quite unacceptable to Christianity in any form I knew of. A year or two later I discovered with great joy that I had a fairly reputable supporter in Plato. Whenever I found a literary passage anywhere that seemed to support reincarnation, I chalked it up in my mind. Nevertheless, my Christian friends seemed to be all so utterly opposed to it that I put it on the back burner of my mind. The back burner turned out to be, however, more of a pilot light. Gradually I began to have a vision of the compatibility, indeed a view that Christianity was being lamentably impoverished for lack of this key to an understanding of it. By the time I was asked to give the Birks Lectures at McGill in 1976, I offered three conventional subjects, and then, perhaps a little mischievously, added a fourth which the dean and faculty unanimously decided was the one they wanted. It was out of these lectures that I developed my first book on the subject, *Reincarnation in Christianity*. . .

Q. Do you think the human race is any more spiritually advanced today than it was 20,000 years ago? Or 100 years ago? Or is it a matter of individual souls advancing or lagging behind as they choose?

A. No, I do not see any *general* improvement at all. Mother Teresa is an exception today as was Isiah in his time. I am incurably an individualist. . . .

Q. Do you have any ideas about your own past lives?

A. I am not "big" on the idea of reincarnational memories. I tend to suspect in principle anybody who claims to have been Napoleon or Alexander the Great in a previous life or to have been flogged as the slave of a Pharaoh in ancient Egypt. One of the blessings bestowed by the waters of Lethe, the waters of forgetfulness that cloud the memory between lives, according to Plato, is that we get a clean slate, unencumbered by an avalanche of memories. I happen to have a good memory and being now 78 with clear recollections dating to the age of two years, I find my mind beginning to be too filled with memories. I'd like another 100 years of this present life, but when I think of the memories I'd amass in that time, I begin to shudder at the sheer weight. So I'll be content with what I can get and let the slate be cleaned for the next life. . . .

—Courtesy *Venture Inward*, March-April 1988
(Virginia Beach, Va.)

THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY

The July 1988 issue holds interest for all students of Theosophy with its research articles "Albert Leighton Rawson," by Paul Johnson; "H.P.B., Dorjeff, and the Mongolian Connection," by Joscelyn Goodwin; "Did 'The Secret Doctrine' Succeed?," (a paper presented to the Centenary Congress, Chalfont St. Giles, 1988) by Leslie Price; and book reviews: *The G. D. and T.S.* reviewed by Gregory tillett; Dr. J.I. Siemons' *Theosophia In Neoplatonic and Christian Literature*, reviewed by Stephen Ronan; Michael Gomes' *The Dawning of the Theosophical Movement*, reviewed by Jean Overton Fuller. And quote in full the editor's paragraphs headed:

The Judge Case

New evidence has in the past five years greatly changed our perspective on the Blavatsky case (though as Mr. Godwin's paper in this issue indicates, the last word has by no means been written.) Has not the time come to look again at the Judge case? Some Theosophists today have not heard of it, and others will deprecate attention to such painful circumstances. In its effect, however, it resembles the shattering of the Western Christian Church at the Reformation, which has for some time been the subject of ecumenical scholarship.

With the publication of a new edition of Mr. Judge's writings (to be reviewed in the next T.H.), and the growing inter-organizational cooperation of Theosophical historians, we should now re-examine what really happened when Mr. Judge was charged with wrongdoing by his colleagues, and the unity of the Movement shattered. T.H. will shortly publish the first of several articles treating the case from different points of view. At some point, a meeting or symposium concerned with the matter will be arranged.

Recently I was told that a certain Theosophical archive contained important evidence to the detriment of Judge. From another quarter, I have been told that the same archive contains vital data vindicating Judge! We hope that historians will be allowed to clarify this complex story.

—L.P.

EDWARD BELLAMY (1850-1898)

Several reviews have noted the anniversary of *Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy, first published in 1888. Many scholars, among them John Dewey, considered this book the most influential work by an American writer in that period. Theosophists are familiar with the practical efforts of Edward Bellamy through the approval given by H.P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 44). "Looking Backward," she says, "admirably represents the Theosophical idea of what should be the first great step toward the full realization of universal brotherhood." However, since that day, the ideas of Bellamy have been given such materialistic interpretations that for some they have come to represent the opposite of true brotherhood. The same could be said of Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia*. Dean Stewart comments on this in his essay, "The Century of Edward Bellamy" (*Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 10, 1988):

There is an underlying reassurance of the fundamental democracy of Bellamy's America, but its mechanics, the forces that necessitate and protect this democracy, are only briefly outlined. The military model for society that Bellamy envisioned has often been criticized. In fact, it was derived from his boyhood vantage on the Civil War and the perception of a society made cohesive and ordered through purpose. It is this sensibility, not especially a love of the military, that inspired Bellamy. His social ideal has sometimes been called "the religion of solidarity."

Stewart briefly describes the content of *Looking Backward*, and then says:

Roughly these are Bellamy's notions, but the specifics of his social order are secondary to the broad philosophic importance of the book. Although within a few years after its publication more than 100 Bellamy or Nationalist (as the movement was called) Clubs sprang up, by the time of the author's death in 1898 they had disbanded and his followers and influence been incorporated with the populist and socialist movements and parties of the turn of the century and after. By the 1930's the left generally thought of the work as terribly simplistic, but many attributed their initial interest in socialist ideas to "Looking Backward." . . . In our time, and especially on the anniversary of the book, "Looking Backward" still points an accusing finger at injustice and deprivation in the United States and continues to ask one of the oldest questions in Western civilization: the possibility of Utopia.

In closing Stewart remarks, "It's very apt that the Bellamy centenary should fall in an election year. And reading him again is a tonic and enjoyable. If the year 2000 seems much too near for the attainment of utopia, well, that's OK. After all, some of the reviewers of the book in 1888 said they thought it could take much longer."

Young as he was, Edward Bellamy had a profound knowledge of human nature and his stories contained theosophical ideas. In March, 1888 the *Path* gave praise to "To Whom This May Come," an account of a race of "mind readers":

It is, in reality, a chapter of pure Occultism in the guise of a story. It seems like a prophecy of the condition that humanity shall attain in some of the more exalted races to be evolved on our planet at some time in the distant future. Mr. Bellamy has a remarkable faculty—which is that of the scientific thinker in the highest sense; the man who beholds things in the light of imagination held in control by law—of supposing a certain condition of existence, either physical, psychical or spiritual, and then depicting life as it must necessarily be under such conditions.

"To Whom This May Come" was last printed in *Theosophy*, Vol. 71.

—Reprinted from *Theosophy*, June 1988.

THEOSOPHY FOR THE MASSES

Vicente Hao Chin, Jr.

Recent experiences have demonstrated to us that the common mass of people, especially the poor, can readily appreciate theosophical wisdom such as karma, life after death, brotherhood and unity, etc., when clearly presented in Pilipino. They do not seem to have the disadvantage of some educated people who tend to be hypercritical or cynical about new ideas. The more simple folk are open to new ideas. We see by the twinkle in their eyes that they are even eager to share such new-found wisdom with their friends and neighbors.

We have further observed that speakers who address the common folk tend to acquire a practical orientation in their discussions, since highfalutin and intellectual discussions will only croon the audience to sleep. And this is a decided advantage, since speakers are compelled to clarify in their own minds the applications of theosophical wisdom in daily life.

More and more we are beginning to see that this is really our work here in the Philippines: *to bring the great ancient wisdom within the reach of everyone*. We are beginning to realize, too, that perhaps the slow pace of our dissemination is due to lack of vernacular

literature on theosophical teachings. We limit ourselves to educated intellectuals who comprise perhaps a small portion of our population. In a way, the educated people need less help since they have easier access to English books and lectures available in major cities.

If this perception is correct, then it is a clear call to all theosophical workers to assist in:

1. The translation of standard theosophical books into Pilipino;
2. The publication of leaflets and short literatures in Pilipino;
3. The standardization of theosophical terms in Pilipino;
4. The development of qualified lecturers and discussants in Pilipino and other dialects, such as Cebuano, Ilonggo, etc.

All this will take years, perhaps decades. But without filling the above needs, Theosophy will remain a luxury reserved for educated intellectuals . . .

This then is a call for all who have the Masters' work at heart to help prepare the grounds for the dissemination of the wisdom to all people at all levels. This is a call for writers. This is a call for lecturers and group discussants. It is a call for all who would wish to alleviate our fellowmen from the weight of fears, superstitions, ignorance, hatred, sectarianism, divisiveness, and lack of compassion.

So much work and too little time. Will you help?
—Editorial in Newsletter from the National President, the T.S. in the Philippines, May 1988.

MIDDLE-AGED AT TWO BILLIONS OF YEARS

For those interested in knowing exactly where we stand, it might be said that we are nearing the middle of the fourth sub-race of the fifth Root-Race on Globe D, during our Fourth Round. So far as the life of the Earth Chain is concerned, this is known to be just a little more than half spent, or to put it in more familiar terms, this Earth is middle-aged at two billions of years!

The lesson that we would bring to mind is that this matter of the Rounds and Races is not a far away speculation, but is a process that is going on all the time. We *are* making the rounds of the globes of our Chain, and in some millions of years hence, we shall find ourselves as the human family functioning on a higher globe, and then still higher, and so on until we have passed once more complete around, and shall find ourselves yet once more here on Globe D, some 400,000,000 years hence!

—L. Gordon Plummer, *From Atom to Kosmos*, p. 101

TWO NEW BIOGRAPHIES

Blavatsky and her Teachers: an Investigative Biography. East-West Publications in association with The Theosophical Publishing House, London. £14.95, hard cover, 270 pages, 12 illustrations, Appendixes, Notes and Bibliography.

The Comte de Saint Germain: Last Scion of the House of Rakocsy. East-West Publications, London £14.95, hard cover 335 pages, 11 illustrations, Appendixes and Bibliography.

By Paul Johnson

Jean Overton Fuller deserves the respect of all theosophical readers for her courage in entering the mine field of theosophical biography and emerging with two important books published in 1988. *The Comte de Saint-Germain: Last Scion of the House of Rakoczy* is the only thorough and scholarly work available on the mysterious Comte, and is an outstanding example of the kind of historical writing we need: nearly 100% objective biography, with very little observable bias on the part of the author. However, Fuller's *Blavatsky and her Teachers*, while the best HPB biography now available, is a much less objective work, and indeed is at least as much hagiography as biography. (Hagiography is recounting the lives of the saints, and is characterized by a worshipful, idealizing tone and a tendency to ignore evidence which does not fit the desired image.)

First, then, why is Fuller's St. Germain biography so exemplary? Subjects of her previous biographies have included the WWII spy Madeleine, Sir Francis Bacon and the poets Shelley and Swinburne. She has also published 13 volumes of her own verse and 3 translations of verse. Her experience as a biographer shines through in the 3 pages of acknowledgements which open the book. She thanks 33 Britons, 9 Germans, 6 Frenchmen, 5 Hungarians, 4 Dutchmen, 2 Italians, 2 Danes, 2 Americans, 1 Swiss, 1 Pole and 1 Finn for their assistance in her researches. This is evidence of years of painstaking investigation aided by scholars around the world. The result is a 335 page summary of the life of the enigmatic Comte, opening with a review of the life of Francis Rakoczy, leader of Transylvania in the early 18th century. Was he the father of St. Germain, as has been suggested? Fuller's answer to this question is not given until more than 200 pages have been devoted to a thorough examination of manuscript and print sources, listed in a 6-page appendix. She traces St. Germain via this evidence from his first exposure in the 1740s as a musician in London through his death in 1784 at the home of his patron, Prince Carl of Hesse-Cassel.

St. Germain's activities in French diplomacy, textile manufacturing and dyeing in the low countries, travels in Russia and Italy, and chemical experiments in Germany are narrated in successive chapters. Fuller examines all these associations and more as she proceeds to unveiling her central conclusion as to the Comte's true parentage. Her candidate for mother of the Comte is the frustrated wife of a gay Medici, and her arguments for this are plausible. Fuller's theory is at least more satisfying than that of Isabel Cooper-Oakley, the only theosophical writer who previously addressed the question.

Since it is of course the HPB biography which is greatest interest to ET readers, a comparison is in order both to Fuller's excellent St. Germain biography as well as Marion Meade's mediocre 1980 effort at portraying HPB. The one page of acknowledgments (compared to St. Germain's 3) reveals a relatively smaller investment in research. Because Fuller is a Theosophist who knows HPB's teachings well, she comes to her task armed with the advantage of great stores of internalized information. But she is also burdened by the disadvantage of this information having become amalgamated over the course of years with a large measure of personal opinions and loyalties which an outsider would not have acquired. "Things all theosophists know about HPB" bias Fuller's interpretation as much as "things all skeptical materialists know" did Meade's. Certain core assumptions determine each author's approach, whereas in an objective biography these would be left quite open to question. Five points on which Fuller and Meade make a priori assumptions are: 1) All HPB's phenomena are genuine 2) Allegations regarding her love life or use of drugs are false 3) The portrayal of her teachers given in the theosophical literature is accurate 4) HPB's accounts of her travels are accurate 5) In cases where HPB's testimony conflicts with that of other witnesses, they are lying. Fuller assumes each proposition is true, in typical hagiographic fashion. Meade assumes the opposite of each proposition. Is anyone genuinely interested in searching for the truth? Aren't biographers deceiving their readers with the pretense of objectivity when they so begin with assumptions regarding every key issue in the life of their subjects?

Although the smooth narrative flow and novelistic style of Meade's effort are not matched by Fuller, *Blavatsky and her Teachers* is still a superior book, precisely because it brings into play the sensibilities of a long-time student of HPB. Fuller's wider experience means that she can feel resonances and sense possibilities to which Meade is oblivious. Following her intuition, Fuller pursues many interesting by-ways of HPB's life and applies an observant and quirky intelligence to many

hitherto unexplored subjects. Pages 63 to 194 form the heart of Fuller's 270 page volume, taking us from HPB's 1878 arrival in Bombay to her final arrival in London nine years later. She takes most of HPB's phenomena at face value, but her narrative of the phenomena is far less contaminated with superficial and hasty judgment than is Meade's. Still, a better biography would have asked scores of hard questions about the phenomena—more knowledgeable than Meade, but more skeptically than Fuller.

The best thing about *Blavatsky and her Teachers* is its several chapters on the Mahatma letters and the Coulombs and their letters. Here Fuller is an unabashed defender of HPB and a theosophical apologist, but in this role she interprets the Coulombs and their motives more convincingly than has been done previously. She is especially acute in her linguistic analysis of the letters produced by Emma Coulomb, reputedly written by HPB. Fuller's treatment of the Mahatma letters places them into human context in a way which will be helpful to readers, and she brings up the heretofore ignored question of the Sikh identity of the authors.

More unusual is her detailed discussion of HPB's gyn ecology. If her conclusions on this subject, supported by physicians consulted, are accurate, they lay to rest many charges against HPB. However, not all readers will be convinced by her speculations on the matter.

After HPB's arrival in London, Fuller returns to the hagiographic complacency of the first 60 pages, summarizing Blavatsky's literary endeavors at length. In so doing she breaks the arc of her narrative and never really recovers her momentum. The last few chapters wander among the events of HPB's final years without much sense of purpose, concluding with a discussion of the Panchen Lama's endorsement of the *The Voice of the Silence* and its implications for HPB's significance. She concludes chapter 85 with the words "the endorsement of this by the Panchen is his endorsement of everything"—meaning presumably everything Fuller believes about HPB on the sole authority of HPB's testimony. Her first appendix dismisses the letters to Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff (found in the second volume of *HPB Speaks*) as probable forgeries, as well as the HPB letters produced by V.S. Solovyoff. It seems apparent that the rather unflattering light these letters cast on HPB is disturbing to Fuller and that she would prefer that they be forgeries. It cannot be denied that the rather untrustworthy sources of these letters lead one to suspect their genuineness. However, overlooked evidence in these letters attests to their genuineness, as I have discovered in the course of recent research.

Fuller's bibliography runs to six pages, but a review

of it reveals that these are more varied and better-known sources than those cited in the St. Germain volume. From all appearances, the intellectual energy expended in *Blavatsky and her Teachers* is less than in the author's previous biography, but the bhakti energy invested will compensate for many theosophical readers, for whom a new, sympathetic theosophical biography will be welcome after a wait of many years. However, Fuller's Blavatsky will have very little influence outside the theosophical world because of its hagiographical and uncritical tone, and it cannot be recommended as a book to give to non-theosophists.

In her eagerness to justify the "received view" of HPB's veiled years, Fuller ignores many relevant clues. Among the significant questions not seriously addressed by Fuller are HPB's associations with Sufism, Freemasonry, Russian intelligence, Albert Rawson, Agardi Metrovitch, and the teachers of Gurdjieff. My researches into these questions, and the contemporary researches of other scholars including Ian Brown, Robert Gilbert and Joscelyn Godwin, have led to quite different conclusions from those of the "received view" which Fuller generally endorses. Any new biography must be judged by the number of new insights it provides. While Fuller succeeds in portraying the Coulombs with new insights, she fails to do this with most other aspects of HPB's life. However, there is little doubt that future Blavatsky biographies will explore many of the areas ignored by Fuller.

Can one assume that a dialectical process is involved in the development of the study of theosophical history? Perhaps an insensitive hatchet job biography (Meade) naturally brought forth an expression of faith in HPB from a true believer. Proceeding dialectically, the next Blavatsky biography will be obliged to synthesize Meade's thesis and Fuller's antithesis. Will this occur?

If the next biography of HPB is as thorough and convincing as Jean Overton Fuller's St. Germain biography, its publication will be a day for rejoicing for theosophists and truth-seekers in general. Indeed, Fuller's sober, down-to-earth description of St. Germain may well have a salutary effect on the fringes of the Theosophical Movement where he reigns supreme as channeled by various pretenders. But her *Blavatsky and her Teachers* will encourage Theosophists in their present faith in the title characters, without influencing a single skeptic to modify his views on anything.

So now we must look to the 1990s as the decade of promise in which a new and more convincing biography of HPB may stir worldwide interest in her and create new support for the Theosophical Movement. In the meantime, both of Jean Overton Fuller's biographies are recommended reading.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Würzburg Secret Doctrine Convention

Elsmarie Schoppe (Paderborn, W. Germany) writes: "It was wonderful to share the Conference with around 350 persons, members and visitors. It was a masterpiece of organization by Helga Rex, and arranged in such a short time. There were many lectures, followed by good music. Visitors (and members) were impressed. The atmosphere was harmonious and kindly. And here and there you could hear: 'Such a meeting should be soon again!' The time seems ripe for such theosophical sharings. We met, as you know, at the Marienburg Fortress, a place where the stones cry out against the cruelties of the past. Maybe the Conference helped lighten the atmosphere a little. Maybe a flow of brotherly harmony was spread over that place. Adding all the positive points together, the Conference was a signpost for a possible future direction. Wait and see!"

Many longtime Point Loma friends attended, among them Irmgard Scheithauer and Renate Behrenbeck from Berlin, Georg and Ursula Schwarm from Nuernberg, Wilfried and Erika Goltz, also from Berlin (Wilfried read a brief message from P.L. Publications and the *Eclectic*); Herman Vermeulen, leader of the TS PL-Pasadena (with headquarters in The Hague) spoke; as did Hermann Knoblauch, who heads the PL-Covina TS, with organization headquarters in Hannover. Mr. Beetz, from the Hartmann TS of Berlin called the convention a historical date, a "new beginning."

Pasadena SD Conference

This, too, with some 275 or so attending from several European countries, Canada, Africa and Australia, and with representative speakers from both the Adyar TS (Joy Mills and John Algeo), a ULT member (Gene Meyer) joining with Pasadena members in panel discussion, and an address by Manley P. Hall, of the Philosophic Research Society, was by all considered a positive success and a most harmonious 2-day gathering.

And Paris, November 11-12-13, 1988

As we go to press, word comes from Daniel Caracostea, of the editorial staff of *Le Lotus Bleu*, that the 3-day S.D. Conference "was a success, because of the quality of the papers read and because most of the audience who had come to learn did learn something. . . . When I launched the idea of the Conference I thought very few would come, because it is generally admitted (unfortunately) that the SD is a book far too difficult for the average student of Theosophy; but I found that my first thoughts were wrong, for more than 110 members (and a few non-members) attended. . . . The idea in planning the Conference was to have papers

of different levels so that everybody could find something 'to eat'. Further, a symposium was organized with young members not specially acquainted with the SD." Following most of the talks there was audience participation. Two members of the ULT also presented papers.

Further from Würzburg

Helga Rex, Würzburg Conference convenor, writes: "I am very glad I could do my part to assist this network success. I think all of the leaders now are very hopeful. I was asked by several to organize another Congress for a future year. But first I have now written to all leaders and called for a "Leader-Conference" in the next spring perhaps where all could take part in a 'round-table talk' discussion of problems and themes as: convention dates, book tables at meetings, common public relations, etc. After the good atmosphere in Würzburg I think such a plan quite possible without dispute. . . . All lectures given in Würzburg will be published in a brochure, and we hope before Christmas."

Some Recent Theosophical Articles

"Theosophy for the Future" by Jeanine Miller, a paper presented at the 1988 Chalfont St. Giles Congress (from which we quoted briefly in our last *Eclectic*); also H.J. Spierenburg's article "Tsong-Kha-Pa: His Life And Work According to H.P. Blavatsky." (in *Theosophical History*, October 1988)

"Making of 'The Secret Doctrine'" by Michael Gomes (in the Sept.-Oct., and Nov.-Dec. 1988 *The Theosophical Journal*, TS in England).

"The Holographic Model and Esoteric Traditions" by Renée Weber; "Reincarnation Explored" by John Algeo; and "On the Virtue of Not Knowing Who You Are" by Philip C. Novak (a special issue of *Theosophia*, issued by the Dutch Section TS (Adyar), devoted to studies on "The Secret Doctrine: 1888-1988," with contributions from Joy Mills, John Algeo, Ronald Engelse, Annie Besant, Norman Hankin, Aryei Sanat, Stephan Hoeller, Wim van Vledder, Henk Dubbink and Henk Spierenburg).

A "Comparison of C.W. Leadbeater's *The Chakras* with the Writings of H.P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge, and G. De Purucker," by Mark Jaqua (Protogonos, Fall 1988, No. 4).

"What Is The Secret Doctrine" by Geoffrey Farthing; "Essential Aspects of The Secret Doctrine" by Joy Mills; and "The Real Tribute Today" by W. Emmett Small; (in *Le Lotus Bleu*, issues of October and of November 1988).

Victor Arthur Endersby

From Elena E. Metson, daughter of Victor Endersby, we learn of his death in Napa, California, on November 8, 1988, and in his passing salute an indefatigable worker for Theosophy for all the long years of his life (born December 19, 1891, in Montana). He is perhaps best known for his *Theosophical Notes*, which, self-published for well over 20 years, carry his basic researches and his vigorous comments on theosophical 'meandering' or downright misconstruction of basic teachings. His book *The Hall of Magic Mirrors*, a defense of H.P. Blavatsky and a scientific explanation of her psychic phenomena at "the shrine" in Adyar, is a unique contribution to theosophical literature, and still in demand. As an engineer Victor always preferred a 'scientific' testing and explanation of all phenomena, and this always aided him in his studies.

The brief announcement from Mrs. Metson had this quotation from W. Q. Judge: "*The way gets clearer as we go on, but as we get clearer we get less anxious as to the way ahead.*"

Our understanding sympathy goes to Victor's daughters and family and friends, and our appreciation of a life nobly lived.

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

R. Worthington, Orpington, Kent, England— I should be grateful for the opportunity to reply to comments made by Mr. D. Reigle in his review of "A Student's Companion to Patanjali," published in the Nov./Dec. issue of *The Eclectic Theosophist*.

It would seem to me that Mr. Reigle is seeking to make a point about TPH publications and has homed in on the above-mentioned title. With respect, he has completely misconstrued the purpose of the book. It was never intended as a publication for scholars. There is no shortage of such works on a subject so widely known about as the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. It should be clear from the small scale of the work that it was intended as an introduction to the subject and not as a comprehensive treatise. Because the subject matter is so difficult the reader/student may be forgiven for seeking an exposition that is concise and readable.

I am well aware that question and answer was a well established method of teaching; that was precisely the reason why that format was chosen for this presentation. I made no claims to scholarship; however, I attempted to keep the translation as accurate as possible, and material that was supplied by myself is quite clearly separate from the sutras themselves.

I hope that my book will find a readership among those who have an interest in Raja Yoga and that would-be students will go on to explore other literature that is available on the subject. My companion should continue to be useful for quick and easy reference.

With thanks, Yours faithfully, R. Worthington

Leslie Price, Editor Theosophical History, London, England—Your reader W.K., commenting on "Theosophical History" in ET Sept. p. 9, is disturbed by our reprint of "Mars" by C.W. Leadbeater: "I fail to see why such an article should be printed." He does not think it compatible with the S.D. Well, he may be right; we prefaced our reprint with a quote from the S.D.

But we are a history journal, and we print significant historical material. CWL is a big part of T.S. History, just as Trotsky, say, is part of modern Russian history. Ironically, there are people in the Adyar society who agree that Leadbeater's views on five-foot Martians should be concealed; hence the omission of this section from the Quest edition. If we are not to be allowed to say even in a historical journal that this is what was thought, where can we?

As for the Mars-Mercury problem, no one should make up their mind about this before reading the symposium of that title in "The Theosophist," August 1940. (This issue understandably did not reach all destinations; it contains incidentally George Arundale's stirring editorial "Britain shall not fall.")

Ann Evans, Clwd, England—I've been meaning to write and let you know how much I've appreciated the "Esoteric Teachings" series by G. de P. At first I thought I had read it all before, but was soon astounded when I realized how much more these books reveal.

Dallas Tenbroeck, Calabasas Park, Calif. (On the "1900 Letter" attributed to a Master):—Thanks to the "1900 Letter" I've done a lot of reviewing of the literature: *Mahatma Letters*, H.P.B. to A.P. Sonnett, *Path* articles by W.Q.J., and a number of H.P.B.'s comments from *Lucifer* and *The Theosophist*—obviously "physical plane" *proofs* won't work. Content and suitability is all. Further, the real value (of any 'communication') is purely to the *individual* who receives it—as it is probably tailored to *his* capacity, character and relative advancement on the "Path." At least, that is my surmise! The more I study, the more it seems as though one can never fully understand how another feels and thinks—and so, it is better for us to be 'spectators and cheerers-on', and *not* be critical or obstructive! So it is good that a number of people are interested; shows you how much interest, and readers, you are getting!

Yes, the *Theosophical Forum* (1892-96) contains many 'gems'. I've spent several weeks re-reading its issues. Most of W.Q.J.'s answers, and some others, are valuable to us *now*. You are also quite right in regard to A.B.'s answer! So long as she was 'friends' with W.Q.J., and, under H.P.B.'s 'tuition', she spoke and wrote in one way—after H.P.B. died and she went to India (under Chakravarti's influence?) there is evident a great change—difficult to understand or to characterize, and very confusing to students who do not go deeply enough into the *history* of the modern "T.Mvt."

Now, considering "Adyarites" (or anyone else, for that matter)—the danger of choosing "leaders," as one might in politics or government, shows up. If "knowledge is power," then *everyone ought to verify for themselves!* Taking another's "say-so" is so dangerous, and actually (in my opinion) *stunts* personal development, as Mr. Judge seems to say in one of his articles. Psychologically it must be a great test of personal integrity to be confronted 'now' with statements made, positions assumed, ignorance of fact, or, of philosophy and logic that one once had, may still be laboring under, or feels compelled to 'defend' by delusion of self-justification and pride. Generosity and tolerance are the only 'keys' to that Brotherhood that the T.S. was founded to establish

R. Vosse, Wynberg, Cape, So. Africa—Many thanks for H.P.B.'s Commentaries on the New Testament. From a brief peep inside they look quite fascinating—and to think that all that amazing information is contained in the books we have available at arm's length. . . . We must really be grateful to Dr. Spierenburg for his arduous labor of love. And to you, of course, for having it printed.

Hilda Lewis, Bournemouth, England—With regard to G. de P.'s

Fraternization Movement, the real work towards that end was esoteric—the planting of seeds not only in the hearts of those who were then his students, but into the atmosphere. Some may have fallen on stony ground, but there is evidence that germination has been going on behind the veil and is now beginning to surface. The wheels of the gods grind slowly. Many of those older students have gone on, and a whole generation, now middle aged, were not even born at the time and can have no idea of conditions then either in the T.S. or the great world. Just as HPB taught us, this last quarter of the 20th century has brought amazing changes, and turmoil preceding the birth of the new age, and how true were G de P's words in *Wind of the Spirit*: "Perhaps it may be fifty years before we know at least the inner meaning of what is now coming upon us" . . . and "those of you who may be alive to see the handwriting on the wall had better awaken . . . Those of you who have ears to hear, hear."

As I see it, the Societies are composed of atoms who are fallible humans however much in earnest; THE MOVEMENT can only manifest through them when and as ready.

Shirley Bates, La Mesa, Calif.—Have enjoyed many articles in the *Eclectic*, among them: (Nov. Dec. '87) the commentary on the effect of "Shirley MacLaine's Mysticism for the Masses." She has all the resources, but not the soul, for transmission of higher ideas. Such a shame to prove spirituality can be profitable, as she stated in *Time/Newsweek*. We need less bastardization of spirituality at this cyclic time of spiritual unfoldment. Her "Out on a Limb" is bad food for the souls that are thirsting, instinctively, for spiritual growth today. Also enjoyed "Intuition" by HPB (Sept. Oct. '87), and "Metaphysical Fad: a Cycle Returns."

Truth and Light to all true aspirants, and the E.T. is a true channel of conveyance.

Richard E. Hiltner, Ojai, Calif.—G de P's esoteric teachings are one of the most important and lucid series I have had the pleasure of reading. What a magnificent experience to have personally been in the E.S. under his leadership. Many thanks to those who felt that the world was ready to hear such marvelous ideas (I hope we are *truly* ready).

RECENT POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS

Echoes of the Orient Vol. III, Compiled and edited by Dara Eklund, hard cover, viii, 534 pp. illustrated, full index, \$18.75.

Section I reprints Judge's famed *Echoes From the Orient*: A Broad Outline of Theosophical Doctrines, originally published in *Kate Field's Washington*, 1890; Section II is given to Tracts and Pamphlets, which includes *An Epitome of Theosophy*; Section III carries Newspaper and Journal Articles; Section IV, Miscellaneous Articles and Extracts; and Section V is composed of teachings that in his day were issued as strictly confidential to members of the Eastern School of Theosophy only.

The New Testament Commentaries of H.P. Blavatsky, Compiled and edited by H.J. Spierenburg.

Bibliography of New Testament sources and of HPB's works, General Bibliography, Index to N.T. texts, O. T. texts, Rabbinical texts, and to the works of H.P.B., as well as detailed General Index. "This work shows the enormous knowledge displayed by H.P.B. on Christianity and its eastern and 'pagan' origins, and the

esoteric significance thereof." \$8.00, lexitone cover, xxiii, 188 pages.

The Inner Group Teachings of H.P. Blavatsky to her Personal Pupils (1890-91). A Reconstruction of the Teachings, by H.J. Spierenburg, with a short Historical Introduction by J.H. Dubbink.

Hard cover xxiii—188 pp \$8.00, with Cross-Reference List to the Sources, Index to the Introduction, and Index to the Texts. (" . . . Sheds some of the mystery of the Inner Group . . . An important supplement to the works of H.P. Blavatsky, now published in the Collected Writings series. \$9.50, hard cover, 212 pages.

12 Volumes of Esoteric Teachings by G. de Purucker

Verbatim reprints, never before published, except for members of the Esoteric Section. Average volume 140 pages, with copious Index, Preface, and Appendices.

Some of the titles: "The Esoteric Path: Its Nature and its Tests"; "Galaxies and Solar Systems: Their Genesis, Structure, and Destiny"; "Invisible Worlds and Their Inhabitants"; "The Hierarchy of Compassion"; "Death and the Circulations of the Cosmos"—and seven more. \$7.00 per volume: \$72 the set of 12.

From Atom to Kosmos by L. Gordon Plummer

Beyond our solar system, beyond the Milky Way, out into the spaces of Space. There is no end where we can say "There are no more stars." Whence came these stars? What laws govern them? Who or what is their law-giver? What indeed is life? If we are an eternal part of Nature why do we die? What are Death's mysteries? \$5.25, lexitone, 142 pp.

(Readers are invited to write for full catalog from: Point Loma Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 6507, San Diego, California, 92106).

THE NEW YEAR DAWNS

It has been a constructive year theosophically, stimulated by the chemistry of "The Secret Doctrine" Conferences held worldwide. But after the words of 1988, what in acts and deeds in 1989 will follow? Every year is an anniversary, every year an opportunity for greater service. Despite the crime and horror of this Globe D that mock and discourage, universal voices cry out with unsundering hope. What more or Light then can we give? What more of vision and meaning? O, thou *Sol Invictus*, at the very Heart of Being, as we enter this New Year, Let the Light shine! And from all parts of the Theosophical Movement may hearts and minds respond in growing understanding and intelligent performance of duty.

—W.E.S.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Our grateful thanks and appreciation for the following contributions received since our last reporting: M.N., \$15.00; A.E., \$12.50; M.Y. (in memory of Mollie Griffith and Boris de Zirkoff), \$50.00; R.B., \$15.00; J.A., \$13.20; W.S. (in memory of Irene Stashinski) \$100.00; M.J., \$100.00.